DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 065 935 EA 004 514

AUTHOR	Sasserath, Simpson
TITLE	From Hotel to High School: Converting a Residential Hotel into a New Type of Senior High School. Report and Recommendations of the Concourse Plaza High School Planning Committee.
INSTITUTION	New York City Board of Education, Brooklyn, N.Y.; New York City School Space Study, N. Y.
SPONS AGENCY	Educational Facilities Labs., Inc., New York, N.Y.
PUB DATE	Jan 72
NOTE	59p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*Building Conversion; Community Involvement; *Comprehensive High Schools; Conference Reports; Cost Effectiveness; Counseling; Educational Philosophy; Field Experience Programs; Flexible Scheduling; *Hotels; Learning Difficulties; *Planning (Facilities); *School Improvement; School Industry Relationship; Teacher Participation; Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS	Found Spaces; Mini Schools

ABSTRACT

This document reports the result of a 5-day meeting held to recommend the structural building adaptations and the curriculum organization necessary to the renovation of Concourse Plaza Hotel into a high school. According to the planning committee, the hotel has many features adaptable to a school, which would permit a meaningful departure from the traditional structure. The investigation revealed that suites of rooms could be used for small group and individualized instruction in an informal setting, with television and lavatories in each suite; that stoves, refrigerators, and kitchens are conveniently distributed throughout the building for a possible decentralized eating arrangement; and that there are large clothing closets in all the apartments. The recommendations indicate that suites of offices, a switchboard with telephone connections throughout the building, adequate basement areas, and ample space in general would permit quick and economical renovation. The plan calls for a comprehensive high school that would provide for students on all ability levels and offer both academic and career education. Recommendations include mini-schools -- 140 students and seven teachers -- to function for half the school day, with students' choices from a schoolwide selection of courses occupying the remainder of the day; and flexible schedules consisting of 20-minute time modules in various combinations within five 10-week cycles. Plans also call for liaison to be established with business, industry, labor, and the community for a variety of cooperative and work-experience programs. (Author/MLF)

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED 065935

FROM HOTEL TO HIGH SCHOOL

Converting a Residential Hotel into a New Type of Senior High School

Report and Recommendations
of the Concourse Plaza High
School Planning Committee

The meetings were sponsored by the
New York City School Space Study Committee
as one phase of a project supported by
Educational Facilities Laboratories.

EA 004 514

Office of High Schools
Board of Education
City of New York

January, 1972

CONTENTS

Foreword I

Foreword II

Preface

Members of Planning Committee

Summary of Special Features

I. Underlying Philosophy: What Should a High School Be?

II. Transforming Philosophy into Practice

III. Roles and Responsibilities

IV. Some Typical Days

V. From Hotel to High School

VI. Epilogue: Where Do We Go from Here?

FOREWORD I

The Concourse Plaza conference developed a program of secondary education to imaginatively meet the demands of youth and the society in which they live. The conference included students, parents and educators. The students contributed to the atmosphere of informality without detracting from the seriousness with which they approached the problem of shaping an educational design. The meeting resolved that a building formerly used as a hotel could become an imaginative learning environment for high school students.

I felt privileged to be part of this conference, although I could attend for only part of the time. It was an exhilarating experience to think together profoundly with such capable and engaging people.

A special tribute must be paid to the skillful guidance provided by Mr. Simpson Sasserath, the conference leader. This report, in which he summarizes the discussions and conclusions of a week of intensive deliberation, required exceptional energy and insight.

Jacob B. Zack
Assistant Superintendent
Office of High Schools

FOREWORD II

This proposal is a remarkable achievement. We refer not only to the unique opportunity of adapting a hotel to an experimental high school program, but more significantly to the process of developing this program. Here we observe a committee representing every concerned segment of our educational community in a cooperative effort at planning another model in secondary education. This experience was exciting because it highlighted the valuable contributions each could render in the realization of the ultimate plan. One had to sit in the sessions of the Committee to appreciate the interchange of ideas, mutual respect, and compatibility of the participants. There is little doubt that the meeting of minds closed the gap of misunderstanding that too often obtains without this opportunity to air views and review differences. However, we cannot overlook the effective leadership of Mr. Sasserath in weaving the Committee into an enthusiastic and tireless team and his profound sense of responsibility in writing this draft of the Committee's proposal.

We also acknowledge the generosity of Educational Facilities Laboratories in funding the week of undisturbed planning at Arden House and in preparing this report for distribution. Once again we have proof of what can be accomplished if attention is not distracted by the many insistent demands of the

school day, and if time and place are provided for a creative venture.

This plan is another important contribution of the Task Force on High School Redesign as it looks forward "Toward the 21st Century." It demonstrates the vision, capacity and ability of our staff to seek new horizons, formulate new designs and move forward with confident commitment.

Oscar Dombrow
Assistant Superintendent
Chairman, Task Force on High School Redesign

PREFACE

The committee planning the design of this new high school is a heterogeneous group from various standpoints: age, position, ethnic origin, sex, experiential background and personal outlook. It includes representatives from different organizations: the United Federation of Teachers, the Council of Supervisors and Administrators, the Presidents' Council of Bronx High School Parents Associations and the Bronx Council (students). There is some preponderance of representation from the Bronx, because the school will draw all its students from this borough. Even so, the schools, residences and affiliations of the participants extend throughout the city.

However, the members of the committee have one fundamental trait in common -- a strong and abiding interest in high schools that will meet the changing needs of students and society. They recognize the growing dissatisfactions with conventional high schools, the problems created by large schools, and the need to involve students more personally in all phases of school life. Consequently, they volunteered to work on the project of transforming the Concourse Plaza Hotel into a high school.

A hotel has many features adaptable to a school which can depart meaningfully from the traditional structure. For example:

suites of rooms usable for small group and individualized instruction in an informal setting; television in every suite; lavatories in each suite rather than toilets for boys and girls en masse; and stoves, refrigerators and kitchens distributed throughout the building making lunch in surroundings more intimate than the usual huge, mass-production student cafeteria possible. Some of these factors may appear to be matters of environment and not education, but they create a school climate which can help make students more receptive to learning and involvement.

Another consideration is the presence of suites of offices, large clothing closets in all the apartments, a switchboard with telephone connections throughout the building, adequate basement areas and ample space in general. Thus the process of renovation, as compared to the erection of a new building, would be relatively quick and economical. Why the Concourse Plaza? This hotel at 161st Street and the Grand Concourse, is readily accessible by public transporation. The neighborhood is integrated and is filled with resources that a school can use for student activities and school-community relationships.

These important elements became evident to the committee when it visited the Concourse Plaza in October, 1971, explored the premises and examined the building plans. The next step, made

possible by support from the Educational Facilities Laboratories, was a five-day meeting of the Committee, November 15 to 19, 1971, at the Arden House in Harriman, N.Y. Discussions took place morning, afternoon and evening. Resource persons from industry, the Office of High Schools, the Division of School Planning and Research, and the City Planning Commission participated. Two major sources were used and adapted: the ideas in "Toward the 21st Century", written by The Task Force on High School Redesign (of the Office of High Schools), and suggestions from the design and operation of the John Dewey High School in Brooklyn.

The result is this report "From Hotel to High School". It is the hope of the Committee that the recommendations will be followed with all due speed by renovation of the Concourse Plaza Hotel as a high school suitable to the students of today and tomorrow.

THE CONCOURSE PLAZA HIGH SCHOOL: SUMMARY OF SPECIAL FEATURES

The school will be a comprehensive high school providing for students on all ability levels and offering both academic and career education. Liaison will be established with business, industry, labor and the community for a variety of cooperative and work-experience programs.

The school will use resource centers and mass media extensively by capitalizing on existing hotel facilities, such as television in every suite, and installing additional equipment.

From the inception of the school, students will have an active role in planning, curriculum, administration, services and activities.

Teachers will play a major part in development of curriculum and planning of school policies.

The school will be divided into mini-schools, each organized around some central purpose, for half the school day. Within each mini-school, students, teachers and guidance personnel will work as a team.

The present physical setup of the hotel--suites of rooms, upholstered furniture, etc.--will be retained for informality and comfort.

A wide choice of school-wide courses and independent activities will be offered to students in the other half of the school day.

Flexibility of time will be achieved through 20-minute modules in various combinations, and five 10-week cycles, each containing about 45 days. Students may attend any four cycles, or five for extra credit.

Students will gain academic credits for their involvement in school and community affairs.

Students with learning or language disabilities will be helped through the intimate school climate, the opportunities to select their own activities, and systematic attention to their deficiencies.

Working agreements with local colleges will be established for interchange of personnel and resources and teacher training both in the school and the colleges.

Concourse Plaza High School Planning Committee

Simpson Sasserath, Principal--Committee Chairman
Central Commercial High School

Pauline S. Wyre, Parent--Committee Secretary
James Monroe High School

Jacques Boehm, Assistant Principal (Social Studies)
Dodge Vocational High School

Paola Bullock, Student
Walton High School

Oscar Dombrow, Assistant Superintendent
Chairman, Task Force on High School Redesign

Deborah Fields, Student
Theodore Roosevelt High School

Charles A. Gibson, Guidance Counselor
John Dewey High School

Carl Golden, Teacher
John Bowne High School

Grace Griffenberg, Parent
De Witt Clinton High School
George M. Hall, Assistant Principal (Music)
Taft High School

C. Edwin Linville, Principal (On Terminal Leave)
Taft High School

Leo Weitz, Chairman, Department of Secondary Education
Pace College

Resource Persons and Consultants

Louis Cenci, Executive Secretary
Advisory Council for Occupational Education

*August Gold, Administrator
Division of School Planning and Research

*Rachel R. Lieberman, Educational Planning Section
City Planning Commission

Stuart C. Lucey, Assistant Superintendent
Office of High Schools

John Nicholson, Eugene Connell, Karen Geiss, Annette Nolan
New York Telephone Company

Beatrice Sass, Parent
Walton High School

Jacob B. Zack, Assistant Superintendent
Office of High Schools

*New York City School Space Study Committee

I. UNDERLYING PHILOSOPHY: WHAT SHOULD A HIGH SCHOOL BE?

Whether a high school is to be built from its foundations or converted from an existing building, it is impossible to proceed successfully without knowing what you would like the end product to be. Call this an educational philosophy, if you will, or simply a practical plan. Contrary to the belief of some, the two are eminently compatible.

A senior high school, then, should be a place where:

Students and teachers get along well. They work together as human beings with common purposes and mutual respect.

Students have a chance to be heard in matters that concern their welfare, that is, in virtually everything going on in the school -- as individuals and through their representatives in student government and school government. Students are able to make choices of courses within required areas or strands of learning, of elective courses, and of activities within a flexible schedule. While there should be help available to guide students and to encourage them to set personal goals, the decisions will be their own.

Students get comprehensive offerings to give them a thorough grounding in academic knowledge and skills, to prepare them for higher education and to enable them to realize career goals and aspirations.

Courses are real and practical, for example, Spanish as it is spoken in New York City or mathematics relevant to a student's actual needs and aims. Students develop a sense of social responsibility, so that they give service to others in the community and in the school; so that the school becomes a place for service and sharing.

There are close working relationships with the community leading to effective use of community resources, student and school services to the community, and opportunities for students to obtain work and other field experiences.

The guidance program reaches every student through the skill and understanding of the counselors, the help of other personnel (both professional and paraprofessional), the influence of peer groups, and a school climate in which students come to understand themselves and their own aims. Students gain competence in basic skills: how to read, how to write, how to communicate, how to study, how to learn, how to deal with people. Students learn not only for knowledge but also for joy and beauty. They are stimulated to creativity in self-expression and appreciation.

Opportunities are furnished for students to learn and understand the essentials of our cultural heritage: in history,

in science and mathematics, in literature and in the arts.

The culturation process stresses other world areas as well as Western Europe, and students learn to appreciate the cultures of both their own group and other groups.

Group identity and pride are fostered for smaller as well as larger minorities, for example, Cubans, Chinese and American Indians.

Parents are constantly involved in the planning school policies and school activities.

Somehow the present tide of anger, disenchantment and frustration is reversed, so that the school promotes student involvement rather than disengagement and withdrawal.

Students are encouraged to appreciate the quality of life and not just the quantity.

Programs have not only relevance but also significance. Outcomes include not only joy but also effort and productiveness.

Programs and activities really "come through" so that students want to go to school.

No school, whether on the drawing board or in operation, can

expect to fulfill all of these objectives; nevertheless, they are ends toward which a school should strive and for which it should be planned and structured. Therefore, they comprise the rationale on which the design of the Concourse Plaza High School is based.

II. TRANSFORMING PHILOSOPHY INTO PRACTICE

The underlying philosophy for the Concourse Plaza High School is more than a collection of noble words and phrases. It is also the means to construct a workable school program coalescing the best features of what a high school should be with the physical advantages of the Concourse Plaza Hotel. Such a program contains the following recommendations.

Mini-Schools: The school or total student population will be divided into mini-schools of 150 students and 7 teachers. This is an estimate, since the number of students and staff members in any one mini-school will be flexible to meet demands and needs. Thus, there may be 15 mini-schools for a school population of 2,250 students.

Each mini-school will function for half the school day, that is, all morning or all afternoon. The other half of the student's day will be devoted to a school-wide selection of courses and activities. The half-day arrangement will allow for the use of mini-school facilities by two groups each day, one group attending their mini-school in the morning and taking individually programmed school-wide courses in the afternoon and the second group reversing the process -- school-wide courses in the

morning and their mini-school in the afternoon. Another administrative advantage is that at any time of the day, only half of the student body will be moving to classes on different floors, while the remaining half of the students are shifting within their respective mini-schools, each on one floor. Thus pupil traffic will be reduced by 50%.

Students will be able to choose their mini-schools from a number of possible areas. They will share in determining the type or nature or thrust of the mini-schools and their offerings and in planning the curriculum and activities of their own mini-schools. Some typical areas in which mini-schools may be organized are:

Community service

Urban studies

Public service

Humanities

Ethnic cultures

Theatre or performing arts

Creative arts

Foreign languages

Business education

Medical technology

Electromechanical skills

Other career programs

Cooperative programs

Special features of mathematics or science

In general, it is expected that students will remain in their selected mini-schools for most or all of their high school careers. They will be free, of course, to make changes where their interests have altered or where they feel that a shift will benefit them. Each mini-school group will be heterogeneous in ability, as the major criterion will be the common interest of the students in the theme or purpose of the mini-school. It is possible, too, that an entire mini-school group will decide to pursue a different theme at some point. Such a decision would be highly unlikely in an occupational field, such as business education or an extensive area of interest such as creative arts. However, a theme such as urban studies or humanities might not be as suitable, on a high-school level, to intensive work over a period of 4 years. In any event, the determination would be in the hands of each mini-school group.

In the mini-school, the students and teachers will work together closely as a "family." The physical surroundings will help to foster this feeling, as there will be no traditional classrooms. Conference rooms will be available for meetings of the whole

mini-school, when desired, but most of the work and instruction will take place in comfortable rooms or lounges adapted for use within the existing suites. It has been noted that every suite has a lavatory, one or more clothing closets, a telephone and a television outlet connected with a master antenna.

With the half-day arrangement, there will be two mini-schools on a floor in most cases, one operating in the morning for students who will take school-wide courses in the afternoon, and the other operating in the afternoon for students taking school-wide courses in the morning. The setup will be a natural one for team teaching, with distributions of students and teachers in accordance with student-teacher planning, into groupings of various sizes and with provision for individualized research, study and instruction. The professional staff will be bolstered by paraprofessionals and college students. Every mini-school will have ready access to a resource center containing technological aids such as projectors, tapes and cassettes, and duplicating equipment.

Schedules will vary from day to day depending on the activities planned. Frequently, time may be spent in field trips, as in urban studies, or in work experience, as in business education, or in hospitals, as in community service, or in other activities

outside the school.

Within the three hours for the mini-school, there will be time for counseling students with group or individual problems and for lunch. Although other provisions will be made for lunch, possibly in a central cafeteria, many or most of the students and teachers will make use of the vending machines on each floor for sandwiches, cake and beverages, or the stoves and refrigerators in suites. Some may wish to bring lunch from home. The possibility of operating kitchen facilities, available now on some floors, will be investigated. In some instances, teachers and students may wish to eat together in lounges provided for that purpose. In these ways, the lunch period will be one of ease and informality rather than noise and confusion. as in the typical school cafeteria.

Since entering students may not be ready to select their own mini-schools, they will be placed in special mini-school groups for a half-year. Here they will take common subjects, such as English and social studies, along with a program of orientation to the school and the mini-school pattern. At the end of this period, they should be prepared to make an informed choice of mini-schools.

Rest of Day: Mini-schools have much to offer students and teachers: a smaller group in a more intimate setting, a greater chance for personal identity and a feeling of belonging, activities based on common interests, a family in which everybody knows everyone else, and more individualized approaches to instruction and to problems. However, there are limitations, too. Groups become isolated in the school and choices are confined to the narrow province of the mini-school.

Therefore, in the Concourse Plaza High School, half the student's day will be spent outside the mini-school. Most of these three hours will be devoted to courses not covered by the student's mini-school. For example, if he receives credit for English and social studies in an urban studies mini-school, he may take mathematics, science and foreign language. If he receives credit for mathematics, science and health instruction in a medical technology mini-school, he may take English, social studies and music or art.

The remaining time can be used by the student for a varied choice of activities, such as independent study, work in the library, special seminars, meetings of student or student-teacher committees, community service, or simply relaxing and "rapping" in one of the lounges. Additional courses may be elected if needed or desired.

Many of the subjects taken by students outside the mini-school may be required for a diploma by state law or for admission to a particular college. However, there will still be a wide choice or "cafeteria of offerings" within the subject area; for example:

In English: journalism, creative writing, propaganda, Afro-Latin literature, mass media, film appreciation, romantic poetry, Shakespeare, modern novel, linguistics, speech arts, remediation (reading and/or writing).

In social studies: anthropology, psychology, sociology, regional studies, urban studies, ethnic studies, civil rights, women's rights, history of dissent, consumer economics, economic problems, labor in America.

In health education: dance, various sports, swimming, calisthenics, acrobatics (use of both school and community facilities).

Insofar as possible, equivalent provisions for choices will be made in other curriculum strands.

20-Minute Modules: Periods of time for each course of activity will be built from 20-minute modules. Within the school day for one session, there will be 9 modules in the morning totaling 3 hours, and 9 modules in the afternoon. A 10-minute hiatus will be provided between the morning and afternoon modules for

interchange of students from mini-schools to school-wide courses and activities, and vice versa. There will also be a 10-minute span in the morning before the beginning of classes and activities, making a school day of 6 hours and 20 minutes. However, no official period will be necessary, since the mini-school can serve as the home room unit.

The use of the 20-minute module will make it possible to arrange for periods of instruction or activity in varied blocks: 20 minutes, 40 minutes, 60 minutes, and so on. This is a flexible and manageable design.

Ten-Week Cycles: The year will be divided into 5 ten-week cycles, exclusive of the Christmas and Easter recesses, with about 45 days in each cycle. In effect, each of the conventional terms will be halved and the summer months will be the fifth cyle. A student will attend school for any four of these cyles. In the fifth cycle, he will have several options: taking a vacation as he does now during the summer, taking additional courses for advanced credit or make-up work, or getting field experience in employment or community activities for which he will receive extra academic credit. Schedules of teachers, administrators and other staff members will be adjusted similarly to meet the options that they select.

This pattern will furnish increased flexibility in curriculum, in student choices of attendance periods during the year, and in staff choices of working time and vacations. It will allow for different time combinations of courses. It will make effective use of the summer in an airconditioned building. (The utilization of the summer cycle will depend on demand and need.) It will also facilitate year-round use of the building and its facilities for the benefit of the students.

College Preparation: The mini-school pattern and the elasticity of choice in other courses will not conflict with requirements for college admission or academic preparation for college. Appropriate course credit will be granted for studies within each mini-school; for example, ecology will be credited as science and social studies, humanities as English and social studies. The rest of the student's program will be planned to meet state requirements, such as American history and health education, city requirements in effect at the time, and the student's college aspirations. Where feasible and desirable, acceptable variations will be included, e.g., work experience, community service, and passing state or city examinations.

It is expected that the focus on courses chosen by the student, standards arrived at with the students, independent study, and

close working interrelationships will prepare students for the rigors of higher education at least as effectively as the conventional high school program.

Education for Careers: Students will be prepared for careers in a variety of ways. Vocational courses will be organized in business and distributive education. Shops and laboratories will be planned in such areas as medical technology, electro-mechanical skills, or other fields suggested by labor, industry and the Advisory Council for Occupational Education. Where students desire occupational programs not available in the school, arrangements will be made to send them for part of the day to nearby vocational high schools serving as skills centers.

The community will be a prime resource in career education, so that cooperative and work experience programs can become a major feature of occupational preparation. Where provisions can be made, business and industry will help the school to set up training centers as a bridge between high school and work.

As part of this plan, there will be short-term preparation of some students for specific jobs coinciding with their graduation. In some instances, through the granting of academic credit, diplomas can be issued after students have left the school and

then given evidence of success on the job. In addition, extensive reliance will be placed on community resource persons and facilities for orientation of students to work and the establishment of career goals. The end result hopefully will be both improved academic performance and better preparation for employment.

It will be remembered also that education for careers is not necessarily a terminal program. Liaison with community colleges will assist students to continue their training in a chosen field, for example, secretarial science. Students going on to senior colleges may elect courses appropriate to their occupational aims, such as medical technology or business law.

Field Experience: An important aspect of the program will be a broad program of field experience in which all students will be encouraged to participate and for which academic credit will be given. Work experience has already been described as one type of field activity. Another will involve different phases of the creative arts: dramatics, music, fine arts, writing, etc. The Bronx County Courthouse, just across the street, will be useful as a source for experiences in observing political and judicial processes.

The stress will be on community service and public service to inculcate positive attitudes toward citizenship, social responsibility and sharing through actual practice not only in the school but also in the community. Such service will be tied in with courses in the school like urban problems or community citizenship; sometimes the service will be the central activity of the course. Also, students will have the opportunity to gain credits by engaging in a full-time project during a ten-week cycle, perhaps in a hospital or child care center or public agency.

In order to relate field experience and services to the educational program and the social growth of the students, teachers will be assigned as staff coordinators, using the time that would normally have been needed to conduct classes for these students if they were in school. Help can be provided as well by paraprofessionals and students from the colleges, under the direction of the coordinators. Thus school personnel will work directly with the agencies where the students are serving, to ascertain the constructive nature of the tasks performed, to assess the progress of the students and to do any necessary trouble-shooting.

Remedial Help: Undoubtedly a number of the students entering

the school will have severe learning or language disabilities. While they will be only one component of the student body, the genuine success of the program may hinge on systematic attention to their needs.

A primary factor will be the motivation of these students by having them select courses and activities that have purpose and meaning for them. The intimate climate of the mini-schools will also be helpful in giving them a sense of belonging, a feeling that teachers and other students know them and are interested in them. The team approach in the mini-schools will allow for small-group instruction and individual assistance from staff members, paraprofessionals and other students.

In addition, specific measures will be taken to overcome deficiencies: diagnosis of disabilities, psychological aid where needed, skills centers for individual help, use of technological aids like tapes and teaching machines, and preparation of materials in such areas of disability as reading and mathematics. For those with language difficulties, bilingual approaches may be tried.

Most of the time, these students will be participating with other students in the mini-schools, extracurricular activities, career education, and cooperative and work-experience programs.

Stress will be laid on occupational goals, specific job training and job placement in conjunction with a diploma. The school will enlist the services of community resource agencies such as the Urban Coalition and the Economic Development Council.

The academically retarded student will benefit in the Concourse Plaza High School from the flexible structure of the school program and careful advance planning for his problems, including the in-service training of teachers.

At the same time, the overall school program will be geared to the needs and levels of all students, to set standards to which slower students can rise rather than those to which abler students will regress.

Tie-in With Colleges: The school will establish working relationships with local colleges and their teacher training courses. There will be many values. College personnel can serve as consultants in the evaluation of programs, the modifications of programs and additional innovations. In working together, both the school and the colleges can strengthen the pre-service training program for college students and in-service training for teachers in the school. There can be experimentation with teacher interchange between the high school and the colleges.

The colleges can be used in the field experiences of students in the high school for service, for orientation to college and for orientation to professional careers. A major value will be the use of college students as counseling aides and teacher aides, giving them pre-service experience and giving the school a reservoir of resource personnel.

Student Activities: Machinery will be set up for student involvement in planning and government. Students are already on the committee promulgating this report, and more students will be consulted before the opening of the school.

Once the school is in operation, students will help to plan the mini-schools and other offerings and will participate in determining curriculum, policies, services and activities. There will be provision for student government as a resource in the mini-schools and on a school-wide level through representatives from mini-schools. Student-faculty committees will be organized as advisory groups, possibly as adjuncts to the Consultative Council. The Parents Association may well be a Parent-Teacher-Student Association.

To a large extent, curriculum planning and student government will function during the school day, but extracurricular activities

will be carried on beyond the school day: teams, clubs, publications, etc. Every effort will be made to develop a full complement of student activities for their intrinsic importance and as a means of achieving integration and unity within a mini-school framework.

Grading and Evaluation: The type of marking system to be used and the means of evaluating student work and progress will be planned by the students and faculty of the school, at its inception and during its operation. It is suggested that failure in a course or subject should not result automatically in a repetition of the course by the student. Other methods can be employed consistent with the circumstances, such as making up work at home, special tutoring, passing a test at a later date, repeating only the areas of weakness, or repeating the work in a different form.

Guidance and Counseling: The mini-school will be the chief vehicle for counseling students. Besides the full-time counselor and the mini-school coordinator (whose functions are discussed in the next chapter), there will be help from auxiliary personnel, such as family assistants and counselors-in-training from cooperating colleges. Other resource persons -- psychologists,

social workers, etc. -- will be made available through the colleges, community agencies and the Bureau of Child Guidance.

It is expected that a major means of student adjustment will be the friendly climate of the mini-schools and the school program as a whole. In this connection, peer group approaches will also be employed as part of the design for guidance and counseling.

III. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

So far, the focus has been on the role and activities of students. It is equally important to examine the functions of all those in the school or connected with the school with whom the students must work and to whom they must relate.

Teachers: The teachers in the Concourse Plaza High School, if the school is to flourish, must be a significant force for educational betterment through their leadership in curriculum development, their teamwork with students and with one another, and their full, active participation in planning of policies and activities. Their professional status and their primacy in instruction and education must be recognized by the students, the parents and the school administration. Educational improvement, change and innovation depend on their involvement and support.

There will be time for these purposes and activities. The teacher without other administrative tasks will be occupied in classroom instruction for an average of 10 modules or 3 hours and 20 minutes a day. Because of the mini-school pattern, some planning can be carried on with students in small groups or with students and other staff members in large groups as part of the instructional

process. Other activities for teachers would include work in curriculum, participation in meetings of committees, common conference periods with colleagues in the same mini-school and remaining time utilized on an individual basis. The particular assignments of each teacher will be worked out and agreed upon cooperatively within the framework of collective bargaining agreements.

How will the right kind of staff be found or developed? Teachers with experience or interest in the type of program offered by the school will be sought. With the help of cooperating colleges, a system of teacher internship will be organized for the first year of service. Experienced teachers and student leaders as well as school administrators and college personnel will determine the procedures. In addition, college students who have been assisting in instruction and counseling as part of their pre-service training will want to join the staff when they become eligible. As time passes, there will be a further process of natural selection, in which qualified teachers seek transfer in and teachers not adaptable to the program seek transfers out.

Administrators: The school will utilize three positions from the total allotment of assistant principals, for assistant principals in administration: one to supervise and coordinate

the guidance program; one to be in charge of organization and general administration; and one to oversee the administration and coordination of the mini-schools. Additional administrative support will be furnished in accordance with school needs and personnel allowances, for example, in programming, student activities and employment counseling. Wherever possible, school aides and paraprofessionals will relieve teachers and administrators of routine duties in such areas as audio-visual aids, attendance, supplies and patrols. It is assumed that the school will have the services of a coordinator of student affairs and a drug education specialist, and will take advantage of federally and state funded projects for added services.

The normal allowances for deans and attendance coordinator will be used to provide a teacher-coordinator for each mini-school. The mini-school coordinator will teach a maximum of 6 modules or two hours a day, so that he can devote time to attendance, discipline and administrative problems in the mini-school. He will work closely with the guidance counselor and other personnel involved in his mini-school. Since he will be teaching in the mini-school and his responsibilities will be confined to the students in that group, he will know the students and be able to work with them on the basis of a personal relationship.

Supervisors: The number of assistant principals in supervision will depend on the school allotment for assistant principals minus the three assistant principals in administration. Each supervisor will teach two or more modules a day, as required by current regulations, either in one of the mini-schools or in a school-wide course. He will be in charge of curriculum and instruction in his own licensed field or fields and in one or more of the mini-schools where the content includes his areas of specialization at least in part. For example, a social studies chairman may teach one course in labor relations, supervise all other school-wide courses in social studies and be responsible for supervising two mini-schools -- one in urban problems and one in ethnic studies.

In addition to classroom visits, especially for new teachers and those in need of special help, the supervisor in the Concourse Plaza High School should stress approaches in consonance with the rationale of the school: group activities with the supervisor as the leading member of the group; sharing through visits and planning; utilization and development of teacher abilities and talents; teacher training through internships, pre-service programs and in-service activities; and involvement of students in the planning and learning process. He must show flexibility not only in his concept of subject matter but also in his outlook toward educational change.

Counselors: There will be one guidance counselor working full-time for every two mini-schools -- a ratio of one counselor for 300 students -- plus a school-wide counselor for college advisement. This ratio can be maintained within the usual allotment by not making use of part-time grade advisors and thus dropping teacher positions provided for this purpose. Federal and state funding may also help to supplement guidance services. The overall responsibilities of the counselors will include involement in curriculum planning; educational, vocational, behavior and personal counseling; group guidance; diagnostic testing; articulation with colleges, industry and feeder schools; liaison with outside agencies, parents and community; and coordination of activities with the school-wide guidance program.

There will be supportive services from the school medical staff, auxiliary personnel such as family assistants and counselors-in-training from the cooperating colleges; resource persons such as a psychologist and social worker; the mini-school coordinators; and teachers and administrators in general. As noted, an assistant principal in administration will be in charge of the guidance program. In addition to his background in guidance and counseling, he should possess the necessary qualities of leadership and sensitivity.

Parents: Parents will be deeply involved in the school through the Consultative Council, the Parent-Teacher-Student Association and opportunities for a wide range of volunteer activities. A parent suite will be maintained for meetings and planning. The comfortable and informal atmosphere will provide an attractive setting for parent committees, conferences, social functions and other parent activities in the school.

Community: If the school is to make optimum use of the community and its resources, there must also be community involvement in the program of the school and the welfare of the students. The Consultative Council, school-community committees and joint projects will serve as vehicles for this process. In this connection, it must be remembered that the school will, in effect, have two communities, one small and one large. The smaller community will be the neighborhood surrounding the building, with its business enterprises, residences, agencies and resources. The larger community will be the entire borough of the Bronx from which the school will draw its pupil population. Both of these communities, in terms of their respective interests and functions, are vital to the school and its progress.

Commitment: The success of a school such as this one depends

not only on what it offers but also on what students, staff and community bring to it. Students will select the school for a variety of reasons, in some cases, because they believe in this type of program and will support it. As for other students, who come to the school without any degree of commitment, it is hoped that they will develop loyalty and commitment through their involvement in activities meaningful to them and through the tone of the school.

A key factor will be the attitudes of the school staff. In the organization of the school, no extra allowances have been requested for teaching, counseling, supervision or administration. Where additional time has been needed for special functions, it has been provided by redeployment of other standard allotments. Therefore, the efforts and performance of personnel will be the crucial consideration rather than dependence on benefits or funds denied to other schools.

With this in mind, a number of criteria should be established in the choice of staff -- teachers, administrators and supervisors:

Involvement: community awareness and desire to work with community; sensitivity to students' personal needs in both group and one-to-one relationships; commitment in purpose, time and effort.

Curriculum: willingness to develop new ideas creatively with students and other staff members; willingness to evaluate and make changes; receptivity to use of multi-media; interest in developing programs for individualized learning; sensitivity to problems of bilingual students; skill with large and small groups; both special expertise and versatility in scholarship.

Professionalism: interest in self-evaluation; willingness to take courses; willingness to help in training others; cooperative approach to professional growth of self and others.

Relationships: recognition and acceptance of students and their role; ability to work well with others; skill in human relations; sensitivity to feelings of students from minority groups; ability to relate well to students of varied ethnic backgrounds.

The person who must possess and demonstrate these characteristics, above all, is the principal of the Concourse Plaza High School. He must apply as well the added ingredients of personal and educational leadership, high administrative competence, social vision and faith in the future. His philosophy, stature, charisma and judgment are vital to the success of the school.

There is no way of testing for the foregoing traits. However, prospective staff members will know what is expected of them and how the school program calls for these attributes. The demands of the school will serve as a sort of selection process. Also, as with the students, it is felt that staff members with the potential will live up to the criteria, once they become part of the school and its environment.

In like manner, through student and school activities, parents and community members will develop pride in the school and a sense of involvement, so that they, too, will become committed to the school.

If this rationale seems visionary at first glance, take another look. It is very pragmatic. People of any age will rise to situations they believe in. Setting up a situation that will involve participants in a common cause is and must be a keynote of the Concourse Plaza High School.

IV. SOME TYPICAL DAYS

What will a student's day be like in the Concourse Plaza High School? What will a teacher's day be like? The following are a few typical days:

James A.: James is a bright 10th year student, gifted in science and mathematics. He has already completed 10th year mathematics and biology in junior high school. He is in a mini-school entitled Adventures in Science, where he receives credit for chemistry and mathematics. His mini-school meets in the morning.

8:43 Signing in for attendance.

8:50 Modules 1 to 3: Group meeting to discuss experiments and
9:10
9:30 aspects of 11th year mathematics related to experiments. Mathematics is also covered through formal group instruction in basic concepts, such as the binomial theorem, on some days, and individual tutoring by college students where needed.

9:50 Modules 4 to 6: Work on individual and small group experi-
10:10
10:30 ments. James is part of a three-student team who have planned and designed their own experiment under the guidance of a chemistry major from a cooperating college. On another day, they will report and demonstrate to the entire mini-school group.

10:50 Module 7: Brief student council meeting to vote on issue already discussed. James attends as his mini-school representative.

11:10 Modules 8 and 9: Lunch. James gets a sandwich, cake and
11:30 coffee from vending machines on the floor and eats in one of the lounges with other students from the mini-school. They are joined by several teachers.

(Note that Module 10 begins at 12:00 because of a 10-minute break between the morning and afternoon modules.)

12:00 Modules 10 and 11: French, Level 3.
12:20

12:40 Modules 12 and 13: English. The theme of the course is
1:00 science-fiction.

1:20 Module 14: James practices in one of the typewriting carrels. He knows how to type but wants to develop greater speed.

1:40 Modules 15 and 16: Social studies. The course is one in
2:00 urban problems. James delivers a report on pollution.

2:20 Modules 17 and 18: James has permission to leave early
2:40 for baseball practice at a nearby athletic field. He has made the team as an auxiliary outfielder. He remains at baseball practice for most of the afternoon. This activity gives him credit for health education.

Sally B: Sally is an able 11th year student who wants to go on to college. She is in a mini-school entitled Black Studies, where she receives credit for English, social studies and health education. Her mini-school meets in the morning.

8:42 Signing in for attendance.

8:50 Module 1: Meeting on curriculum of student representatives from the mini-school, of which Sally is one, with several of the teachers and the assistant principal in social studies. The group agrees to continue the meeting at lunch.

9:10
9:30
9:50 Modules 2 to 4: Meeting of the entire mini-school for committee reports on pre-Civil War black leaders in the United States. Sally's committee reports on Harriet Tubman.

10:10
10:30
10:50 Modules 5 to 7: Sally is part of a group studying Afro-American dances. She gets credit for health education. Other groups in the mini-school have elected Afro-American music or art and receive credit accordingly. This group meets three days a week, leaving Sally time on other days for other activities in the mini-school or independent study or any tutoring that she needs.

11:10
11:30 Modules 8 and 9: Lunch. Sally has brought a sandwich and fruit from home. She gets milk from the daily school delivery. She continues her committee meeting from Module 1 in a lounge near the office of the assistant principal in social studies.

12:00 Modules 10 and 11: 11th year mathematics. Sally wants
12:20 this course to complete three years for college requirements.

12:40 Modules 12 and 13: Spanish, Level 2.
1:00

1:20 Module 14: Sally goes to the Spanish language laboratory to complete an assignment.

1:40 Module 15: Sally goes to the library and listens to records.

2:00 Modules 16 and 17: Special biology. Sally took biology
2:30 in her 10th year. This course is one in ecology to enable her to complete three years in science.

2:40 Module 18: Glee Club. Sally is given credit for music for this activity. She stays until 3:30 p.m. or later two or three days a week.

George C: George is a 13th year student below average in academic ability. He is interested in the field of business. His mini-school is tied in with the cooperative work experience program and is entitled Careers in Business. It meets in the afternoon.

8:45 Signing in for attendance.

8:50 Modules 1 and 2: Window and store display. This is a
9:10 course that can be credited as applied art or major art.

9:30 Modules 3 and 4: George goes to the math lab to work on
9:50 programmed materials in business arithmetic. He is

completing a set of assignments to get credit for this course, which he failed last year. Some days of the week, he works in the reading laboratory where he gets help from a college tutor in small-group instruction.

10:10 10:30 Modules 5 and 6: Health education. George spends most of the time playing basketball.

10:50 Module 7: George goes to one of the lounges, used as a "rap room", and talks with friends.

11:10 11:30 Modules 8 and 9: English. The course is one in business speech. The class is analyzing tapes of conversations between salesmen and customers in various situations.

12:00 12:20 Modules 10 and 11: Lunch. George buys a frozen food lunch heated in one of the kitchens and eats with friends in one of the lounges on his mini-school floor.

12:40 Module 12: George sees his co-op coordinator to discuss a problem he has encountered on the job.

1:00 1:20 Modules 13 and 14: Consumer economics as part of the mini-school program. The emphasis in this unit is on advertising.

1:40 2:00 2:20 2:40 Modules 15 to 18: George works as a sales assistant in a local store and receives credit in the cooperative program. He usually works until 4:30 p.m.

Miss Jones: Miss Jones is a teacher of English, teaching an average of 6 modules per day in an 11th year morning mini-schcol entitled Humanities and 4 modules per day in school-wide courses in the afternoon (two classes in Shakespeare).

8:35 Checking in, in the lobby. Her official day is from 8:40 to 3:00.

8:50 Modules 1 to 3: Miss Jones and an art teacher analyze
9:10
9:30 phases of the Renaissance period in art and literature with 120 students in the mini-school, through lecture, slides and discussion. Meanwhile the remaining 30 students in the mini-school are working on special projects with other teachers. A school aide tapes the lecture and discussion for those who may want to review the material later.

9:50 Module 4: Miss Jones relaxes in one of the lounges.

10:10 Module 5: Whe works with a committee in the mini-school resource center, selecting a filmstrip for a report on Dante.

10:30 Modules 6 tnd 7: Miss Jones serves as an assisting teacher
10:50
in a social studies lesson on the Renaissance given to a large group. Several times, when literary questions arise, she is called on as a resource person.

11:10 Modules 8 and 9: Lunch. Miss Jones and several other teachers join some students for coffee in the final 10 minutes.

12:00 12:20 Modules 10 and 11: English -- Shakespeare. The tragedies are being studied in this 10-week cycle. The comedies will be covered in the next cycle. The current drama is Macbeth.

12:40 1:00 Modules 12 and 13: All the teachers in the mini-school meet with the assistant principal in English for a common planning session. Periods of time have been scheduled for this purpose. Student representatives from the mini-school participate.

1:20 1:40 Modules 14 and 15: Miss Jones works on her own plans for the coming week.

2:00 2:20 Modules 16 and 17: English -- Shakespeare. See Modules 10 and 11.

2:40 Module 18: Miss Jones meets informally with five students who have asked for her help in organizing a theatre party.

Mr. Smith: Mr. Smith is a teacher of accounting and business practice. He teaches on the average of 6 modules a day in a mini-school entitled Professional Bookkeeping: 3 devoted to exposition for larger groups with the help of visual aids, and 3 devoted to individualized work with smaller groups. He also teaches two school-wide classes in business law, occupying 2 modules each for a total of 4 modules. On a typical day, 2 modules of his

non-teaching time are spent in a mini-school planning session and 1 module in a conference with his student teacher and two college students serving as teacher aides. He participates as well in a federally funded after-school program in remedial arithmetic for which he receives extra compensation. The programs of Mr. Smith, Miss Jones and other teachers in the school will have been worked out in cooperation with the United Federation of Teachers and with suitable provisions for overall teaching loads in terms of average and maximum class sizes.

V. FROM HOTEL TO HIGH SCHOOL

The detailed plan for conversion of the Concourse Plaza Hotel into a functioning high school will be drawn up by the Division of School Planning and Research. The conversion itself may take place by stages, since the school may open originally with five or six hundred students and expand over a period of several years. Meanwhile the main requirements for an enrollment of over 2,000 students can be reviewed:

Present Suites: The suites or apartments on the third to tenth floors of the hotel can be retained to a large extent in their present form. Even the furniture may be usable in some instances for lounges, waiting rooms outside of offices, informal meeting rooms and instructional groups not in need of special spaces or equipment. Facilities in the suites are also usable with little or no adaptation: wardrobes for clothing, telephones, lavatories, stoves and refrigerators where available, television outlets and airconditioning outlets.

Where spaces are needed on these floors for other purposes, these can frequently be found in the suites without any need for breaking down walls, for example:

Storage space

Offices for guidance and administration in accessible spots

Suite for parents

Spaces for vending machines: sandwiches, desserts, coffee, other beverages

Resource centers on floors: tapes, projectors and other electronic aids and materials

Some renovations requiring reconstruction will be necessary. A large area holding 150 students will be required on at least two of the floors for meetings of the entire population of a mini-school. On each floor, in several suites, the walls will have to be removed between two rooms to provide a conference room or class area for 30 or more students. The rehabilitation of kitchens on some of the floors will be considered. These kitchens are now in disuse, but they may be useful for decentralized lunch periods in place of a central cafeteria.

Lower Floors: The large areas on the lower floors can be converted into central facilities with a minimum of reconstruction. Among the needs to be covered are:

Auditorium

Other meeting areas of various sizes (possibly usable as presently constituted)

Gymnasiums

Central administrative offices (available now to some extent on the mezzanine floor)

Custodial areas (in the basement) for central delivery and storage

School library and resource center

Audio-visual center and facilities

Central lavatories for general use

Central cafeterias if needed.

Other Facilities: Provision will have to be made in the conversion for specialized facilities to be used in mini-schools and other courses. These will include:

Science Laboratories and facilities

Industrial arts and home economics

Business education: typing rooms, business machines, data processing equipment

Shops and laboratories for careers, such as medical technology and electromechanical trades

Facilities for theatre arts, fine arts and music

Adequate outlets for electronic equipment of various types

Individual carrels for independent practice and study.

Rewiring: The building will require an electrical rehabilitation. The consequent rewiring can include provision for a public address system with selective tuning to all rooms or suites.

Other Considerations: Additional matters to be considered are the following:

The possible use of a series of stores on the main floor facing 161st Street: for lunches, for merchandising laboratories, for continued public use, or for activities as yet undetermined.

The possible use of the ballroom roof at the third floor level for some outdoor activity (within a safe enclosure).

Provision of a parking area for bicycles (school parking for automobiles does not appear feasible or necessary).

Installation of additional elevators if needed. Review of such need would take into consideration that students in good physical condition will use stairways for distances up to three flights and that judicious programming can limit movement to some degree.

Use of neighborhood facilities to supplement the school plant, for example, the courthouse across the street for large evening meetings and the Yankee Stadium plus other fields three blocks away for outdoor athletic activities.

Even with the renovations that have to be made, the expense will be far less than the funds needed for construction of a new building. The outcome will be a senior high school economical in cost yet modern in design and concept.

VI. EPILOGUE: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

This report of the Concourse Plaza High School Planning Committee is just a beginning. Ideas do have value in themselves, but they come to fruition by a metamorphosis into tangible reality. They require support from different sources -- from the community, from those in authority and from the budgeteers who release the necessary funds. With such support, the aging hotel on 161st Street can, within a relatively short period, be reincarnated as a newborn high school.

However, more is at stake than one school for a limited number of students. If this idea is workable so that the Concourse Plaza High School stands as living proof, then other schools will emerge from outworn buildings and facilities of all kinds. Not only will there be more schools at less cost, but in addition there will be a far wider variety of schools, original in form and conception, to improve education for our children.

This committee does not pretend to have initiated a new era or to have found any sure answers. The members would merely like to think that they have made a small but definite effort toward progress in combining educational services with student needs.

Only time will determine the results.

# # #

ADDENDUM

The alternatives sparked by the initial report and activities of the School Space Study Committee developed with a speed which outdistanced the publication process. Additions and emendations were made to the attached report to bring it up to date, but innovative alternatives, once set in motion, rolled right on. So, as a last flash, this addendum is included on the eve of release, but even as it is written, it has already fallen behind the events.

Capital Budget, 1972-1973

In March, 1972, the Board of Estimate and the City Council adopted a capital budget that added a great number of traditional school projects without jeopardizing any of the Space Study's innovations.

The original five small schools were maintained in the "construction fund" category, a sixth was included for planning. However, the committee turned down the item for Concourse Plaza Hotel - High School, but included funds for the purchase and renovation of the Crossroads private school in East Harlem to serve as a subschool of Park East High School. And on the initiative of the Comptroller, the $3 million item in the Mayor's budget for purchase of "fo nd space" was supplemented by another $3 million for its renovation.

Small schools

Sites for new small schools were approved even before the budget was formally adopted. Although the Budget Bureau feared that plans and sites could not be ready for contract-letting by the end of the fiscal year in June, 1973, it appeared by April, 1972, that construction of several of the schools might be almost completed by that date. The objective of the Board of Education was to take bids by October, 1972, six months after adoption of the capital budget - a previously unheard of time.

Apartment spaces

A zoning ordinance was passed to permit adjustment of volume and exterior space where classrooms are included in a building, and a budget was established for rental of housing spaces in overcrowded school districts.

City lawyers are exploring the possibilities of including leases in the capital budget and of acquiring space on a condominium pattern. Pending legal resolution, apartment space has to be financed through the expense budget in rent payments.

Found space for sale

In March, a resolution started on its way for the acquisition of the building of the mid-city Institute for the Crippled and Disabled which will be used almost "as is" as an additional

facility to provide education for children with impaired sight, speech and other handicaps. It is estimated that the contract of sale can be ready as soon as budget money is legally available on July 1st.

Variations on the found space theme

In some areas builders have proposed to erect new structures and lease them to the Board of Education with option to buy - in effect, creating found space to order. The most dramatic proposal comes from a steel company that offered to put up a one-story building for 600 children in 60 days for half the cost of conventional construction.

The Board of Education also discovered it had already leased a found school space in a former printing plant, but had not used it. The price for converting into a high school annex with standard classroom facilities was $1.6 million, but $100,000 in structural and mechanical alterations plus a few hundred thousand more for carpeting, furniture and panel dividers could produce an exciting, warm and comfortable ambiance which could house up to three burgeoning mini-high-school alternatives.

Renewing old schools

The final 1972-73 budget document carried $2 million more for modernization than had been included in the draft. The

Board began to explore the mass volume techniques developed in other cities based on systems methodology and multiple projects. The guidelines of "as is", "open space", "mobile facilities" were accepted as bases for the updating of old schools, and obsolescence no longer was accepted as tantamount to demolition.

Reconsidering the high school

The City Planning Department has prepared a study of the possible rezoning of underused primary and middle schools so they can be used as high schools with only the addition of mobile equipment and furniture.

A Chancellor's Task Force is planning the mechanics of a pilot program for an evening high school option in lieu of day school, thus freeing not only the student for work or exploration of the city's resources, but also reducing the day-time pressure on facilities.

1973-1974

By using the facilities options detailed in this report, New York City can relieve all its overcrowding by 1975, at the present level of budget allocations. Freed of the hysterical space pinches, the city will be able to expend its educational capital dollars on upgrading facilities and purchasing equipment to meet modern needs.

# # #